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Subject: Cross-Cutting Issues News for June 5, 2018



Cross-Cutting Issues News for June 5, 2018

**Bloomberg
Environment**

Environment & Energy

Highlights

LEADING THE NEWS

Trump Administration Wades Into Fight Over Navajo Coal Plant

By Stephen Lee

The Trump administration is coming to the aid of a giant Arizona power plant that has become an important symbol of the White House's efforts to save the troubled coal sector.

TODAY'S NEWS

EPA Aide Helped Pruitt Arrange Trips, Find Housing, Buy Mattress (1)

By Jennifer A. Dlouhy and Billy House

A top EPA aide helped agency chief Scott Pruitt try to buy a used mattress from the Trump International Hotel, one of several personal tasks she conducted for the administrator whose sleeping arrangements have already prompted investigations.

Aquila Mine Permit Approved Despite Wisconsin Tribe's Lawsuit

By Alex Ebert

Aquila Resources Inc. received the go-ahead from Michigan regulators to build its Back Forty open pit mine despite a Wisconsin American Indian tribe's lawsuit claiming only the EPA can issue the permit.

Going Greener Can Get You Cheaper Loans at This Dutch Bank

By Anna Hirtenstein

Going green is more than just a question of morality at ING Groep NV. It can also result in cheaper funds.

FRIDAY NIGHT WRAPUP

Using Defense Law to Boost Coal Would Be a First for Nonemergency

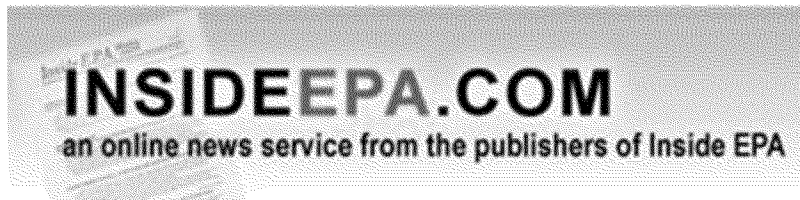
By Rebecca Kern

The White House's use of a Korean War-era defense law as a basis for keeping certain coal and nuclear plants online would be unprecedented in the absence of an electricity reliability emergency, legal experts told Bloomberg Environment.

Angry at Utility's Spending, Lawmaker Seeks Cut in CEO Pay to \$1

By Ari Natter

A lawmaker angry over allegations of mismanagement at a federal power company is proposing to cut the CEO's pay to \$1.



Redefining EPA

Overhauling an agency and its mission

<https://insideepa.com/agency-at-a-crossroads>

Inside EPA's **Risk Policy Report**, 06/05/2018

<https://insideepa.com/newsletters/risk-policy-report>

Latest News

Automakers Target CARB Move To Maintain Current GHG Rule Compliance

Automakers are challenging California's draft proposal to amend the state's light-duty vehicle greenhouse gas rules to ensure compliance with nearly identical federal standards issued by the Obama administration through model year 2025 in response to a forthcoming Trump administration proposal to weaken the limits.

Court Slams Pruitt's Claim On CO2 Link To Warming, Orders Data Release

A federal district court judge is rejecting EPA's refusal to provide documents showing the basis of Administrator Scott Pruitt's claim that human-released carbon dioxide is not the "primary contributor" to climate change, and is instead ordering the agency to produce the records by next month.

Daily Feed

CBD seeks 'disciplinary action' to limit EPA's FOIA denials

The suit seeks to require the government ethics watchdog determine whether disciplinary action is required against government employees.

House Democrats seek subpoena on Pruitt ethics documents

The lawmakers provide new details of a Pruitt scheduler's efforts to secure rental housing for him, obtain an "old mattress" for him from the Trump International Hotel and book personal travel for him.

OCEANS

NOAA chief touts climate science to open global symposium

Rob Hotakainen, E&E News reporter

Published: Monday, June 4, 2018



Retired Adm. Timothy Gallaudet, the acting administrator of NOAA, opened the 4th International Symposium on the Effects of Climate Change on the World's Oceans this morning at the Washington Hilton. The weeklong event drew 675 people from at least 52 countries. Rob Hotakainen/E&E News

NOAA's acting administrator, Timothy Gallaudet, kicked off an international symposium in Washington today by stressing the need for scientists at his agency to study the effects of climate change to protect the oceans.

And even though President Trump's team may include many critics of climate science, he said it's an important priority for the Trump administration, too.

"We're talking about Arctic sea ice loss, warming of waters, changing current patterns, ocean acidification and sea-level rise," Gallaudet said. "Understanding these is more important to the administration because of what NOAA is doing in terms of advancing the blue economy."

Gallaudet had a receptive audience: 675 people from 52 countries, all gathered for the 4th International Symposium on the Effects of Climate Change on the World's Oceans, which opened today at the Washington Hilton.

Gallaudet, a rear admiral who retired from the Navy last year after 32 years, has never shied from the subject of climate change. He's a scientist himself, a former Navy oceanographer with a doctorate in marine acoustics from the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California, San Diego. And he has plenty of experience tracking the risks of climate change to the Department of Defense.

Since getting confirmed by the Senate in October, Gallaudet has become the public face of NOAA.

While Trump chose him for the agency's No. 2 job as deputy administrator, he became acting administrator after the president's nomination of AccuWeather chief Barry Myers for the No. 1 job stalled in the Senate.

Gallaudet told the crowd that NOAA Fisheries is at the forefront of the agency's efforts in adjusting to climate change.

"Interestingly, warming ocean conditions are causing stocks to migrate," he said, citing as an example the black sea bass, a species historically found off the coast of southern New England that has moved to the Gulf of Maine.

"We are having to do more adaptive management and really set catch limits that follow the fish," Gallaudet said.

He predicted that aquaculture will become increasingly important "to address any species that might be in decline because of climate change" and as a way to decrease seafood imports and feed a growing global population.

Noting that the world's population is projected to hit 8.5 billion by 2030, Gallaudet said: "From today, that's like adding a whole another country of China to the world's population, and that's just in a decade. So we're going to have to address how we are going to provide the protein required in a sustainable way. Fisheries offer the most sustainable path towards that."

Gallaudet said NOAA has made great improvements in its weather forecasting in the last decade and will do more research to implement the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act, which Trump signed last year. Among other things, the law aims to improve forecasts for everything from hurricanes to tornadoes.

"It is a top priority for NOAA and this administration," Gallaudet said.

Gallaudet said NOAA's work will only grow in importance, with 40 percent of the U.S. population now part of the nation's "blue

economy," living near coastlines or the Great Lakes. He said the agency "is working very hard for our oceans so that our oceans can work for us."

The 2018 international conference is the first hosted by the United States. Spain hosted the first one in 2008, followed by Korea and Brazil in 2012 and 2015, respectively.

Of the 675 people at the conference, nearly half — or 311 — are from the United States. Canada had 44 registrants, while China had 27 and France and the United Kingdom each had 26, leading the way among foreign countries.

Colombia, Greece and Brunei each had one registrant.

EPA

Pruitt wanted 'old mattress' from Trump Hotel — aide

Kevin Bogardus, E&E News reporter

Published: Monday, June 4, 2018



EPA headquarters can be seen past a sign at Trump International Hotel in Washington. Hannah Northey/E&E News

Democrats on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee released excerpts today of an interview with a top aide to Administrator Scott Pruitt, shedding more light on her housing search on behalf of the embattled EPA chief.

In a [letter](#) to Chairman Trey Gowdy (R-S.C.), ranking member Elijah Cummings (D-Md.) and Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-Va.) said EPA's Millan Hupp confirmed allegations she helped find a new apartment for Pruitt while revealing "significant new details" on the personal tasks she did for Pruitt, including using his credit card to book his personal flights and trying to secure a used mattress from the Trump International Hotel in Washington.

"If Ms. Hupp's statements to the Committee are accurate, Administrator Pruitt crossed a very clear line and must be held accountable," the lawmakers said. "Federal ethics laws prohibit Administrator Pruitt from using his official position for personal gain and from requesting and accepting services from a subordinate employee that are not part of that employee's official duties."

Last month, Hupp sat for a transcribed interview with committee staff as part of the panel's investigation into Pruitt's EPA. The administrator's pricey travel, expansive security and other ethics missteps have come under scrutiny from the committee as well as other investigators, including the EPA inspector general.



Millan Hupp. Hupp/LinkedIn

In excerpts released by the Democrats, Hupp was asked about an email she sent to the Trump Hotel. She said she didn't remember sending the email but did note there had been talks about getting a used mattress.

"I do not recall sending this email, but I do recall there being discussions about the possibility of securing an old mattress from the Trump Hotel," Hupp said.

She added Pruitt wanted to buy a used mattress from the hotel but couldn't say whether he made the purchase.

Hupp also told staff she helped Pruitt book his personal travel using the administrator's own credit card, including a trip to the Rose Bowl.

The EPA aide said she considered Pruitt a friend — Hupp had also worked for Pruitt as a campaign aide in Oklahoma. In addition, she told committee staff that she had visited "probably more than 10" locations to help find Pruitt new housing in Washington in a search that took a couple of months.

Cummings and Connolly requested that Gowdy issue a subpoena on documents dealing with Hupp's housing search, which was originally requested in an April 12 [letter](#) sent to Pruitt by Democrats. They noted Gowdy's previous document requests have asked for this information.

A spokeswoman for Gowdy and the committee said the panel is moving forward with its EPA investigation. Its staff is expected to interview EPA Chief of Staff Ryan Jackson and Samantha Dravis, Pruitt's former policy chief, later this month ([Greenwire](#), June 1).

"To date, the Committee has conducted several transcribed interviews and obtained 2,350 pages of documents as part of our investigation into mismanagement and spending at the EPA," the spokeswoman said in a statement. "This month, the Committee will interview additional witnesses and receive additional document productions."

She also warned that releasing excerpts of witness interviews could damage the investigation.

"Selectively releasing portions of witness interview transcripts damages the credibility of our investigation and discourages future witnesses from coming forward. The Committee will continue conducting a serious, fact-driven investigation, and therefore will wait until the conclusion of our investigation to release our findings," the spokeswoman said.

Hupp's housing search on Pruitt's behalf has come under more scrutiny recently.

Last week, Democratic senators requested that the EPA inspector general investigate the matter. They released emails showing Hupp had used her EPA email address to contact a real estate agent during work hours ([Greenwire](#), May 31).

Pruitt has said Hupp's help in finding him housing happened on her own time.

An EPA spokesman said the agency is cooperating with the committee's investigation.

"We are working diligently with Chairman Gowdy and are in full cooperation in providing the Committee with the necessary documents, travel vouchers, receipts and witnesses to his inquiries," said EPA spokesman Jahan Wilcox.

EPA

Lobbyist tied to Pruitt's condo represented more clients

Kevin Bogardus, E&E News reporter

Published: Monday, June 4, 2018



EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt rented this Capitol Hill condominium from the wife of a lobbyist whose clients lobbied EPA. Kevin Bogardus/E&E News

A lobbyist tied to a Capitol Hill condo that EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt rented part of last year had business with the agency on behalf of at least three clients.

Steven Hart, the former chairman of Williams & Jensen PLLC, had over the past year represented Smithfield Foods Inc., Coca-Cola Co., and the Financial Oversight and Management Board for Puerto Rico before EPA, according to several amended lobbying disclosure reports filed by the firm Friday.

In March, news broke that Pruitt had rented a condo from Hart's wife for \$50 a night for part of 2017, with the subsequent controversy attracting scrutiny from lawmakers and the EPA inspector general.



Steven Hart. Williams & Jensen PLLC

Hart at that time said he didn't lobby the agency. Pruitt, too, has said Hart didn't lobby EPA.

"Steve Hart is someone that was not registered as a lobbyist in 2017. He's a longtime associate and friend," said the EPA chief at a Senate hearing last month.

The new disclosure forms, first reported on by *The Hill*, show that Hart was involved with several clients with business before EPA throughout 2017.

One report lists Hart as lobbying EPA on behalf of Coca-Cola, advocating on issues like clean water and water conservation.

Emails released to the Sierra Club under the Freedom of Information Act show that Hart contacted Sydney Hupp, a scheduler for Pruitt, as well as EPA Chief of Staff Ryan Jackson to set up a meeting between the administrator and Muhtar Kent, chairman and then CEO of the beverage giant, as well as Jon Radtke, who handles water sustainability in North America for Coca-Cola.

"Basically, if Scot [sic] was going to the awards ceremony, Muhtar was going to pull aside and offer to help you on your water projects," Hart said in the email.

"Coke has enormous expertise in clean water development since you cannot bottle Coke with dirty water," he said.

An agency spokesman said the meeting requested by Hart didn't happen.

"This meeting involving Coca-Cola and their clean water steward did not occur. The request was submitted and it went unfilled," said EPA spokesman Jahan Wilcox.

Another amended form shows Hart lobbying EPA on behalf of the Puerto Rico board, concerning water quality and infrastructure after the devastation wrought by Hurricane Maria.

The firm also filed changed reports that capture Hart's work on behalf of Smithfield Foods, including an official from the company's foundation looking to support EPA's Chesapeake Bay programs. Hart also passed on suggestions from that official to EPA on who could sit on its Science Advisory Board (*Greenwire*, May 2).

In addition, Hart had met with Pruitt alongside the Smithfield Foundation official in July last year. Hart helped set up that meeting with the EPA chief (*E&E Daily*, April 23).

A Williams & Jensen spokesman said in a statement that after Hart's contact with EPA was disclosed, the firm decided to audit its lobbying disclosure reports with outside counsel, which led to the amended forms.

"Following the completion of that review and the advice of counsel, today the firm filed amendments to several disclosure reports that include information that was not previously disclosed to our firm and therefore not included in the original filings. No Williams & Jensen client is in any way responsible for the incompleteness of our original filings," said the spokesman.

A spokesman for Hart told E&E News that Hart disagreed that the work related to EPA constituted lobbying but declined to comment further.

CLIMATE

EPA ordered to produce records backing Pruitt claims

Amanda Reilly, E&E News reporter

Published: Monday, June 4, 2018



EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt in an appearance on CNBC last year said human activity was not a primary driver of climate change. CNBC

A federal judge Friday ordered EPA to produce documents related to Administrator Scott Pruitt's claims dismissing human activity as a primary contributor to climate change.

Chief Judge Beryl Howell of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia found that the agency failed to respond to a watchdog group's Freedom of Information Act request seeking the records.

"Although more than one year has elapsed since the plaintiffs submitted the FOIA request, EPA has conducted no search for any responsive records, not produced any records to the plaintiff," Howell wrote.

At issue: a 2017 interview on CNBC's "Squawk Box" in which Pruitt stated that human activity is not a "primary contributor" to climate change. He also said that "there's tremendous disagreement about the degree of impact" that human activity has on global warming.

A day after the March 9 interview aired, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility filed a FOIA request seeking studies upon which Pruitt based his claim. The group also asked for any EPA scientific finding that human activity is not the largest factor driving global climate change.

PEER noted that EPA's own climate change webpage — which the agency has since taken down to update — cited as "basic information" that "humans are largely responsible for recent climate change."

EPA argued that the request was overbroad, unduly burdensome and "not a proper request under FOIA," prompting PEER to take the case to court. The agency later argued that the lawsuit was a "trap" and a "fishing expedition" to elucidate Pruitt's "personal opinion" on climate change.

But in her opinion Friday, Howell rejected EPA's "excuses for failing to comply" with the FOIA request as "not persuasive." EPA's "hyperbolic objection strays far afield from the actual text" of PEER's request, she wrote.

According to Howell, who was appointed by President Obama, PEER's request was "straightforward" and appropriately targeted the records that Pruitt relied upon in making his statements on climate change, not whether those records reflected his personal views.

"Particularly troubling is the apparent premise of this agency challenge to the FOIA request, namely: that the evidentiary basis for a policy or factual statement by an agency head, including about the scientific factors contributing to climate change, is inherently unknowable," Howell wrote.

She gave EPA a month to conduct and complete a search for the records PEER requested and ordered the agency to disclose any records it finds on a rolling basis. Under the order, EPA is also required to submit by July 11 an explanation for any documents it decides to withhold from disclosure.

"The beauty of FOIA is that a government agency can run but ultimately can't hide," PEER senior counsel Paula Dinerstein said in a statement. "This suit forces EPA to determine whether Mr. Pruitt's statements had a factual basis or were full of hot air."

[Click here](#) to read the court's opinion.

APPROPRIATIONS

Committee to vote on Interior-EPA bill

Manuel Quiñones, E&E News reporter

Published: Monday, June 4, 2018

The House Appropriations Committee plans to vote this week on one of the most contentious spending measures of the year: legislation to fund EPA and the Interior Department.

The panel was supposed to have marked up the bill before the Memorial Day recess but postponed consideration until Wednesday morning.

The House Interior and Environment Appropriations Subcommittee approved the legislation in May. The measure was largely bipartisan, but Democrats grumbled about some riders and promised to pursue amendments (*E&E Daily*, May 16).

Separately, the House defense spending bill will come up in subcommittee later this week, the panel said today.

It's a busy week for appropriators in both chambers. The full House is considering its energy and water bill, and the Senate Appropriations Committee will release its transportation proposal (*E&E Daily*, June 4).

Schedule: The Interior-EPA markup is Wednesday, June 6, at 11 a.m. in 2167 Rayburn.

PUBLIC LANDS

Conservation group puts \$1M into LWCF lobbying

Kellie Lunney, E&E News reporter

Published: Monday, June 4, 2018

The League of Conservation Voters, along with its state partners, has launched a \$1 million campaign urging Congress to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund before the program expires Sept. 30.

The campaign combines online organizing, grass-roots mobilization and digital ads targeting certain lawmakers to support legislation from Rep. Raúl Grijalva (D-Ariz.) to permanently reauthorize the popular, bipartisan program (*E&E Daily*, Dec. 22, 2017). [H.R. 502](#), which has not yet been marked up, currently has 226 co-sponsors, including 33 Republicans.

The ads specifically call on Republican Reps. Vern Buchanan of Florida, Steve Knight and Mimi Walters of California, and Keith Rothfus of Pennsylvania to sign on to the bill.

"Although legislation to permanently reauthorize LWCF has enjoyed broad bipartisan support in recent years, those bills have not moved forward," said a June 1 [letter](#) from LCV President Gene Karpinski and 31 state LCV leaders.

"Further, opponents of public lands continue to present a false choice — arguing that we cannot both maintain currently protected lands and waters while investing in protecting new areas, even though both together are vital to maintaining parks and other public lands for the next generation," the leaders wrote.

LCV's annual lobbying day on Capitol Hill is June 6.

LWCF, which uses non-taxpayer money to preserve and maintain the nation's parks, forests, recreation areas and cultural sites, will expire at the end of fiscal 2018, unless Congress reauthorizes it. Proceeds from offshore oil and gas drilling primarily pay for LWCF. The program provides grants to states and localities, and the federal government uses some of the overall money to acquire land and water to promote conservation and recreation.

The LWCF funding level in the House fiscal 2019 Interior spending bill is \$65 million less than the amount (\$425 million) Congress gave the bipartisan program in the fiscal 2018 omnibus. But it's substantially more than what the Trump administration recommended for fiscal 2019, which many Democrats and even some Republicans were disappointed with.

Over the last few months, several groups and state and local officials have visited members' offices to discuss the importance of LWCF to their communities.

Lori Buck, mayor pro tempore of Fruita, Colo.; Shawn Barigar, mayor of Twin Falls, Idaho; and Zac Perry (D), a Montana state representative, met in April with members of the Montana, Colorado and Idaho congressional delegations in Washington. They told E&E News they were heartened by the bipartisan support for LWCF they encountered among lawmakers.

"At a time when the atmosphere between Democrats and Republicans feels so toxic, it is a breath of fresh air to find an issue that bridges both parties," said Perry in a subsequent email. "I hope they can build upon that foundation."

House Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop (R-Utah) in early May expressed optimism that both sides would come together on LWCF.

"It can be easily worked out," Bishop told reporters, adding that there was "plenty of time" to figure it out. "If, at some stage in the game, people want to make it into a political cute football, then there may be problems. If we are all sincere about actually trying to solve it, we are not that far off right now."

The Utah Republican has said he wants more oversight of LWCF to ensure it is correctly disbursed.

In 2015, Bishop introduced a bill to reform LWCF that would have maintained the fund for seven years, created a grant program for localities to build recreational facilities, and limited water and land acquisition, among several other provisions.

YELLOWSTONE

Theory suggests trout themselves sparked ecological disaster

Published: Monday, June 4, 2018

When nonnative trout showed up in Yellowstone Lake in 1994, it was an ecological catastrophe. Former Yellowstone National Park Superintendent Bob Barbee once called it "an appalling act of environmental vandalism," but the park's chief fisheries biologist now thinks the fish may have swum there themselves.

The long-standing theory is that a "bucket biologist" took the trout from nearby Lewis Lake and moved them to Yellowstone Lake.

The theory is supported by some data.

But the new theory from biologist Todd Koel is that the fish are swimming there themselves. Some of the lake trout that flow out of Jackson Dam in Grand Teton National Park could be swimming 40 miles up the Pacific Creek; then they could drain into the Atlantic Creek, which empties in the Yellowstone River.

Tagged fish have made the journey before. Koel said the path presents no real barrier to the fish's movement.

He's working on an academic paper that's in the peer review stages, though he emphasized his alternative hypothesis will require more testing.

Koel added that if the theory is true, the fish probably aren't making the trip annually.

The lake trout invasion has rendered the endangered bull trout "functionally extinct" in 11 of the 12 Glacier Park lakes where the two species interact (Mike Koshmrl, [Associated Press](#), June 3). — CS

WILDLIFE

Texas shop owner imported hundreds of illegal python items

Published: Monday, June 4, 2018

A Houston businesswoman has admitted to illegally importing more than 1,800 python and stingray products.

Annsley Popov, 42, who ran a boutique retail supplier specializing in snakeskin pillows, purses and bracelets, pleaded guilty Thursday in federal court.

The products were imported from Indonesia over two years. On the invoices, Popov wrote that the items were made from "cow leather," rubber or synthetic animal hide.

According to her website, Popov's desire to start her business grew out of her "obsession with her first pair of snakeskin stiletto

heels."

She is scheduled to be sentenced Sept. 4 and will face a maximum of 20 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. Her business, Presmer LLC, could be on probation for up to five years and face a fine of up to \$500,000 (Gabrielle Banks, [Houston Chronicle](#), June 2). — MJ

EMISSIONS

CO2 spikes despite record levels of renewables

[Christa Marshall](#), E&E News reporter

Published: Monday, June 4, 2018



Wind turbines in Colorado. Ed Andrieski/Associated Press

Carbon dioxide emissions from the global energy sector increased for the first time in four years in 2017, despite record amounts of renewables coming online.

The findings from REN21 — an international association based at the U.N. Environment Programme — highlight the challenge in cutting greenhouse gas emissions with growing population levels and expanding cities. Economic growth, lower fossil fuel prices and weaker energy efficiency efforts were central reasons that emissions continued to rise despite the shifting power mix, the [report](#) said.

"While momentum in the power sector is positive, it will not on its own deliver the emissions reductions demanded by the Paris climate agreement," the group said in a statement. "The heating, cooling and transport sectors, which together account for about 80% of global total final energy demand, are lagging behind."

Overall, energy-related carbon dioxide emissions rose 1.4 percent last year after staying flat for three years.

Coal consumption increased 1 percent, reversing a two-year decline. Even though coal construction has stalled in the United States, there are more than 650 coal plants in development globally.

At the same time, renewable power saw its largest annual jump ever last year, with 178 gigawatts added globally. Seventy percent of all new power additions were in renewables. Additions of solar photovoltaic power alone topped coal, gas and nuclear power combined, according to the report.

Declining renewable costs and government policies such as China's emissions trading system are helping bring more renewables online, according to REN21.

Another factor is corporate procurement. Almost half of U.S.-based Fortune 500 companies have emissions reduction or renewable energy targets, which are prompting corporate power purchase agreements. Last year, corporate contracts for renewables grew 26 percent in comparison to 2016.

The activity is spreading to other countries, as well.

"Corporate renewable energy sourcing has moved beyond the United States and Europe and is now found in countries such as Burkina Faso, Chile, China, Egypt, Ghana," the report said.

Developing countries accounted for more than 60 percent of all renewable investments.

The group calls renewable heating and cooling technologies — such as solar heating — the "sleeping giant" because of their lower growth rates. Renewable heat technologies, for example, grew about 20 percent between 2007 and 2015, while renewable technologies for electricity more than doubled during the same period.

Similarly, lower-emissions technologies have been slower to take off in transportation, with more than 90 percent of the sector's energy needs met by oil.

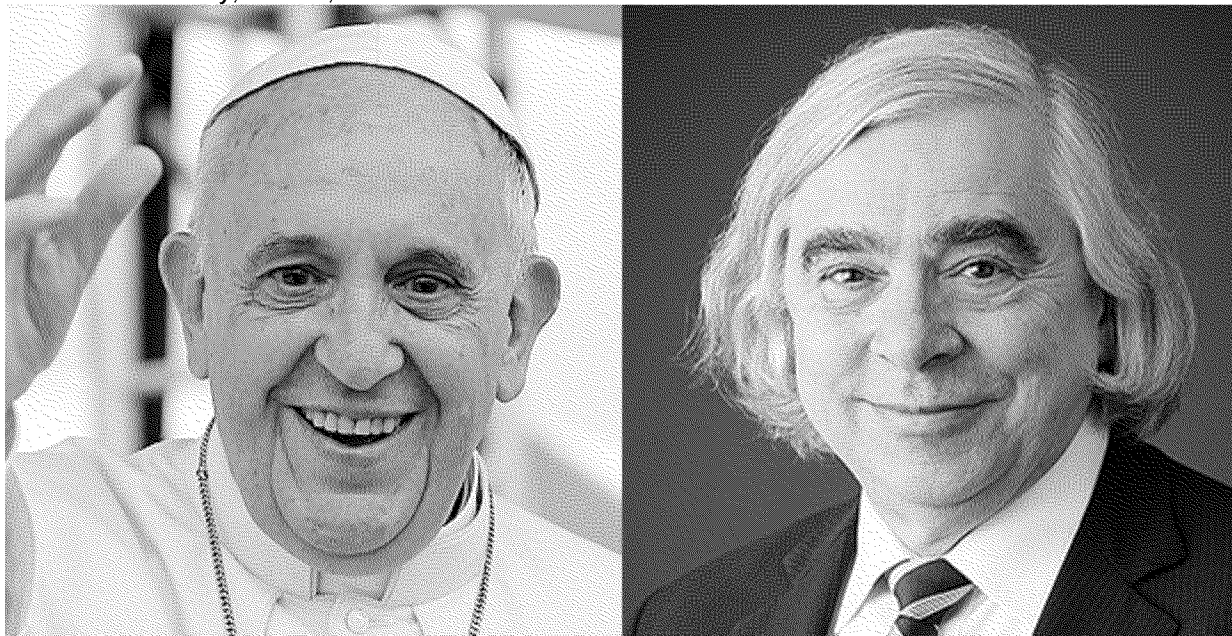
Fewer policy incentives are one reason transportation and heating and cooling are not deploying low-emissions technologies as fast, although there are patchwork efforts around the globe, the group said.

Germany, for instance, recently announced grants worth more \$300 million for deploying electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and the city of Pittsburgh said it planned to charge its new EV fleet completely with solar power.

POLITICS

Pope Francis to meet with Moniz, top oil execs

[Hannah Northey](#), E&E News reporter



Pope Francis is expected to huddle with former Energy Secretary Ernie Moniz and oil executives later this week. Korean Culture and Information Service (Pope Francis); Nuclear Threat Initiative (Moniz)

Pope Francis is expected to huddle with former Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz and a host of oil executives at a two-day conference Friday and Saturday to discuss climate change.

The Vatican invited the Obama-era Energy Department chief to attend the meeting, said David Ellis, a spokesman for the Energy Futures Initiative, a research think tank and advisory firm Moniz launched to promote low-carbon power and innovation.

The Vatican summit, arriving in the wake of President Trump's exit from the Paris climate accord, is expected to feature a number of executives from the world's largest oil producers and investment banks.

Vatican spokesman Greg Burke confirmed that the meeting was occurring in an interview with the Associated Press. Burke said the conference is a follow-up to the pontiff's release of an encyclical three years ago calling on people to tackle climate change and other environmental problems.

Axios, which first reported the event, noted that Exxon Mobil Corp. CEO Darren Woods, BP CEO Bob Dudley, and Larry Fink, CEO of BlackRock Inc., the world's largest asset manager, are all expected to attend. Leo Burke, director of the University of Notre Dame's business school's climate investing initiative, is reportedly leading the effort.

While Burke and a number of executives did not immediately respond to a request for comment, an Exxon Mobil spokesman confirmed that Woods would attend.

"We're hopeful that this kind of dialogue can help develop solutions to the dual challenge of managing the risks of climate change while meeting growing demand for energy, which is critical to alleviating poverty and raising living standards in the developing world," said Bill Holbrook, a spokesman for the oil major.

The pope has repeatedly made tackling climate change a focus and pointed to the Paris Agreement as an example of how countries can take on the challenge together.

Francis has also condemned climate change doubters and said "history will judge" those who fail to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with global warming ([E&ENews PM](#), Sept. 11, 2017).

IDAHO

Teacher accused of feeding live puppy to turtle is charged

Published: Monday, June 4, 2018

An Idaho junior high biology teacher has been charged with misdemeanor animal cruelty over accusations that he fed a live puppy to a snapping turtle in front of students.

The incident occurred in March, according to the parents who reported it. Robert Crosland, who was charged Friday, could face up to six months in jail and a \$5,000 fine.

The school is located in Preston, a small town that was also the setting for the 2004 movie "Napoleon Dynamite."

According to the allegations, Crosland was given a sick puppy, which he fed to the turtle to demonstrate the circle of life. School officials called it "regrettable" but say that it happened after school, not in front of a class.

The puppy was terminally ill, and some parents defended Crosland. "I am not upset. I felt like it was the more humane thing for Robert to do than to just leave it to die," said Farahlyn Hansen.

The turtle was euthanized by state officials, who discovered it was not a native species. The school has received threats in recent days (Alex Horton, [Washington Post](#), June 3). — NB



READ FULL EDITION

1. EMISSIONS:

Trump's coal plan finds critics inside the West Wing

White House officials have yet to reach a consensus over a Department of Energy proposal to subsidize ailing coal and nuclear plants, a top aide told a group of clean energy advocates at the White House yesterday.

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